based), additional central assistance for externally aided projects central assistance for centrally sponsored schemes transferred to the State Governments, special central assistance for hill areas|western ghats|border areas development programme, plan revenue deficit grants, and loans against small savings collections. Normal central assistance and plan revenue deficit grants are released in monthly instalments from April to March each year. Additional central assistance for externally aided projects is reimbursed to the State Governments on the basis of expenditure incurred by them on these projects. Finance Ministry has, however, released 25 per cent of the budget provision made for this purpose in advance to enable the State Governments to carry on the projects initially. This advance is being adjusted against the additional central assistance to be released to the State Governments on the basis of their reimbursement claims, Central assistance for centrally sponsored schemes transferred to the State Governments is to be released to the State Governments at 1991-92 level. The release or this grant is under process. Special central assistance for hill areas|western ghats|border areas is released as and when the respective State Governments present their claims to the Planning Commission and on the Commission's recommendations. Loans against small savings collections are released on the basis of the net collections of small savings. The amounts are released in instalment during the course of the year. The State Governments have, therefore, received the funds due to them for their Annual Plans 1994-95 as per the schedule mentioned above. In addition all the States have also been allowed to raise the bulk of their market borrowing of 1994-95 in the first tranche in April, 94 itself. Out of Rs. 4943.11 crores, Rs 4511.45 crores have been raised.

Simplified Custom Tariffs

1943. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have simplified custom tariffs in the country;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what steps are being taken by Government with regard to exemption of sports goods, supplies to defence organisations and research institutions etc. of the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) Yes. Sir.

(b) A systematic effort has been made to unify rates on similar products to serve both economic rationality and to reduce the scope for classification disputes. A major pruning of the notifications including end use exemptions to about half the prebudget number has been done, thus reducing discretionary power and possibilities for disputes.

(c) Such goods are generally exempted or subjected to lower rate of customs duty under various notifications, subject to conditions prescribtd in those notifications.

Government's equity in Nationalised Banks

1944. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: *Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased* to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to continue to hold 51 percent equity in the nationalised banks in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) and (b) The Banking Companies (Acuisition and Trnsfer of Undertakings) Acts, 1970 and 1980 have been recently amended to provide *inter-alia* for the increase of paid up capital of the nationalised banks by public issue of shares in such a manner that the Central Government shall, at all times, hold not less than 51 per cent of the paid up capital of such banks.